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Time for Check on CIA

Senator Morse (Dem., Ore.) recently called his colleagues' attention to an area in which congress has shown strange reluctance to act.

Morse referred to a report that some years ago an agent for the central intelligence agency (CIA) had won approval of aid for President Diem of South Vietnam even though the United States ambassador there opposed it. Morse said it was impossible to confirm, deny or explain the report because senators cannot find out what CIA policy is.

"For several years congress has refused to pass the necessary legislation that places an effective check upon CIA," said the senator. "Congress has permitted CIA to continue to exercise what appears, in fact, to amount to a police power in a democracy. As a member of the foreign relations committee I cannot tell the senate--nor can any other member of the committee--what the facts are about the CIA policy in South Vietnam or anywhere else in the world."

Congressional committees dealing with foreign affairs, defense matters and nuclear energy have before them matters every bit as secret as the functioning of CIA. Why should not a top flight committee, perhaps patterned after the joint congressional atomic energy committee, keep tab on CIA's budget, operations and policy?